

Washington, DC – U.S. Congressman Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX-23) announced \$11,781,543 in Stimulus grants that will fund green jobs training initiatives in Texas. The Energy Training Partnership Grants are administered through the U.S. Department of Labor and are funded with American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (Stimulus) dollars.

The Texas Energy Training Program grants total \$100 million of the \$500 million in Green Jobs training funding made available through the Recovery Act. The Texas grants will focus on wind energy, solar power and energy efficient buildings.

“As we continue to get our economy back on track, we are always looking for ways to train workers in new and developing industries,” said Congressman Rodriguez. “These grants announced today by U.S. Labor Secretary Hilda Solis are a clear indication that the Recovery Act continues to create jobs and stimulate our economy.”

Secretary Solis made the announcement during a teleconference Wednesday morning.

“Our outstanding award recipients were selected because their proposed projects will connect workers to career pathways in green industries and occupations through diverse partnerships,” Secretary Solis said.

Gilbert Ferrales is Training Director at the Austin Electrical Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee (JATC), one of the grantees. The JATC will partner with other organizations to provide solar installation training to meet employment needs at solar power plants in **San Antonio** and Austin.

Said development of the solar industry is important to the whole nation, but especially to the Southern states of Texas, Arizona and New Mexico.

“It’s a job producer, it’s a way to get away from our dependency on oil and it’s a way to make all of our buildings more efficient,” Ferrales said. “As we develop this industry, the price will begin to go down and eventually the homeowner will be able to put this technology on their homes. The consumer will definitely benefit in the long run.”

A total of 950 workers will be trained in the first year of the grant contract, Ferrales' office said.

Another grant to the International Training Institute for the Sheet Metal and Air Conditioning Industry will impact **El Paso** in Texas and Las Cruces in New Mexico.

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